



FAIRVIEW

**Mesaba Clinics**

Member of Range Regional Health Services

August 24, 2001

ATTN: Kimberly Topper  
Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (HFD-21)  
Food and Drug Administration  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Rockville, MD 20857

Dear Ms. Topper:

As a family physician in rural northern Minnesota I take care of many patients with chronic debilitating pain. Most of this is not due to cancer, but rather to other chronic debilitating conditions such as arthritis, posttraumatic arthritis, and unrelenting neuropathic pain.

I am very concerned about all the bad press that the medication OxyContin has received lately, especially in light of the fact that I have multiple patients who receive significant benefit from this medication. It has improved their function dramatically from lying in bed, severely depressed, and being able to once again participate in pee-wee hockey league, for example. Certainly, there is always a risk that medications may be abused and while there is no guarantee that a given patient may not divert or abuse this medication, the same applies to any of the medications prescribed for pain.

In your considerations regarding OxyContin, please remember to think of the thousands, if not millions of patients being helped in their suffering and in their level of function and please do not punish them for the failures of a few abusive patients.

Thanks for your consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Neil Hoyal, D.O.  
Fairview Mesaba Clinic – Nashwauk

NEH:san

3605 Mayfair Avenue  
Hibbing, MN 55746

Telephone: (218) 262-3441  
Facsimile: (218) 262-6564

101 Southwest 1st Avenue  
Chisholm, MN 55719

Telephone: (218) 254-3316  
Facsimile: (218) 254-3407

462 Platt Avenue East  
Nashwauk, MN 55769

Telephone: (218) 885-2858  
Facsimile: (218) 361-6065

39 Enterprise Drive South  
Mt. Iron, MN 55768

Telephone: (218) 741-2250  
Facsimile: (218) 342-6200